Survey: Nearly Half of Americans Prioritize Mental Health with Daily "Mindful Moments"

Moms Have Greatest Need for Mental Health Breaks, But Are Least Able to Take Them, Parade Media and Cleveland Clinic Survey Shows

NEW YORK – MAY 3, 2022 – Americans are discovering new ways to prioritize and boost their mental health. Many are finding that taking a "bite size" approach is making a tremendous impact.

According to a new 2022 Healthy Now survey[1] commissioned by Parade Media and Cleveland Clinic, 46 percent of Americans have been able to maintain or improve their mental/emotional health by taking multiple 5- to 10-minute breaks throughout the day for activities that relieve stress, depression, and/or anxiety.

Americans are finding these "moments" more doable and effective than more extended periods of mental health-boosting activities. In fact, seven out of 10 Americans (70 percent) believe that taking these shorter breaks throughout the day was more beneficial for maintaining and improving their mental wellbeing than taking one 30- to 60-minute break.

"Everyone's familiar with the concept of the 'mental health day,' but our survey suggests that just a few minutes of time set aside each day to relax and recharge can make a real difference," says Lisa Delaney, Parade Media's SVP/Chief Content Officer. "It's a way of breaking down practices that help benefit a fundamental component of wellness into 'snackable' moments that more easily fit into our busy lives."

Top Activities of Mentally/Emotionally Healthy Revealed

While the fact that almost half of Americans are embracing this approach is a bright spot, the survey reveals that many others continue to struggle with their mental health. More than one-third (37 percent) of all respondents rate their current mental health as average or low. Significant percentages of Americans said they grappled with anxiety (45 percent), sadness and depression (36 percent), and anger (34 percent) at least once a week in the last month.

Crucially, the survey revealed many Americans who rated their mental health as low are not engaging in well-researched activities proven to improve mental health. Less than half exercise regularly (37 percent) or spend time outside (37 percent), compared to 52 percent and 46 percent of those who rate their mental health as high. Those with strong mental health also believe getting adequate sleep (87 percent), movement (76 percent), and socializing with others (71 percent) are beneficial to their mental/emotional health.

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[1] 10-minute online survey conducted among a national sample consisting of 2,012 Americans 18 years of age and older, living in the continental United States. The total sample data was balanced to census on age, region, gender, income level, race/ethnicity and education. To allow us to understand key priority health areas, we included a statically valid sample size of n=100-150 of consumers with each of the following conditions: Cardiovascular Disease, Diabetes, Cancer, Skin Conditions, Respiratory Disorder. The online survey was completed between March 18 -29, 2022. The margin of error for the total sample at the 95% confidence level is +/- 2 percentage points.

"Simply taking a 5-minute walk around the block offers both exercise and time outside to clear your head and recharge for the rest of the day," Kia-Rai Prewitt, Ph.D., a psychologist with Cleveland Clinic's Center for Adult Behavioral Health. "Even so, don't get discouraged if you have to skip it every now and then. Building these into your daily routine is a marathon, not a sprint."

Mothers Struggling Most with Mental Health

Why aren't Americans making these beneficial breaks a part of their everyday routine more often? Survey respondents who rarely or never[2] engage in activities that support their mental health cite being too busy (34 percent) and being a caregiver for a loved one (36 percent) as barriers. Nearly one-quarter (24 percent) of these respondents say they simply don't know how to support their mental health.

The study shows that certain segments of Americans are more affected by these barriers. For instance, the survey indicates that one in three mothers (32 percent) never or rarely[2] spend time improving or maintaining their mental/emotional health, despite reporting lower levels of mental health than fathers. Almost half of mothers (43 percent) rate their mental health as average or low, compared to 26 percent of fathers who said the same. Similarly, 17 percent of mothers report their mental health as "excellent," compared to 33 percent of fathers who said the same.

The survey also uncovered these additional results:

- **Sex is rejuvenating for men; not so much for women.** Men are more likely to find having sex as refreshing after a long day (54 percent) than women (36 percent). When it comes to fathers and mothers, that gap widens, with 65 percent of dads finding sex to be rejuvenating, compared to 44 percent of moms. Women say they are likely to find more solitary activities as restorative, like reading a good book (63 percent) or lighting a candle (48 percent).
- **Working can have a positive impact on your mental health.** Despite the demands of balancing working outside the home and parenting, working parents report higher levels of mental/emotional health than nonworking parents. About seven in 10 (69 percent) of working parents rate their mental/emotional health as strong, compared to 55 percent of nonworking parents. Additionally, working parents are more likely to feel happy, fulfilled, refreshed and productive on a weekly basis.
- **…but working does take an emotional toll.** Despite being happier, working parents also report higher levels of exhaustion (65 percent) and anger (42 percent) on an at least weekly basis, compared to nonworking parents, 52 percent and 31 percent, respectively.
- **Investing in employees' mental health pays off.** Roughly half (53 percent) of those with strong mental health said their employer considers mental health days part of PTO, compared to 32 percent of those with low mental health.

For more information and full results, visit Parade.com/healthynow

About Parade Media

Parade Media develops and distributes premium content across digital, mobile, video, and print platforms. Its brands include Parade, Relish, and Spry Living. Based in Nashville, Tennessee and New

[2] Rarely or never is defined as those make time to improve their mental/emotional health just a few times a month, less or never.

York, the company also creates custom content for major brand clients and retailers. Visit us at parademediagroup.com.

About Cleveland Clinic

Cleveland Clinic is a nonprofit multispecialty academic medical center that integrates clinical and hospital care with research and education. Located in Cleveland, Ohio, it was founded in 1921 by four renowned physicians with a vision of providing outstanding patient care based upon the principles of cooperation, compassion and innovation. Cleveland Clinic has pioneered many medical breakthroughs, including coronary artery bypass surgery and the first face transplant in the United States. U.S. News & World Report consistently names Cleveland Clinic as one of the nation's best hospitals in its annual "America's Best Hospitals" survey. Among Cleveland Clinic's 72,500 employees worldwide are more than 5,050 salaried physicians and researchers, and 17,800 registered nurses and advanced practice providers, representing 140 medical specialties and subspecialties. Cleveland Clinic is a 6,500-bed health system that includes a 173-acre main campus near downtown Cleveland, 21 hospitals, more than 220 outpatient facilities, including locations in northeast Ohio; southeast Florida; Las Vegas, Nevada; Toronto, Canada; Abu Dhabi, UAE; and London, England. In 2021, there were 10.2 million total outpatient visits, 304,000 hospital admissions and observations, and 259,000 surgical cases throughout Cleveland Clinic's health system. Patients came for treatment from every state and 185 countries. Visit us at clevelandclinic.org. Follow us at twitter.com/ClevelandClinic. News and resources available at the newsroom.clevelandclinic.org.